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The Fallen Angel, Eating Potatoes

Walking out of the coffee shop, a bone-piercing cold wind whipped across Urushihara's face.

"Well, we can only go with the flow, you shouldn't think too hard about unnecessary things."

"I am not thinking too hard.....I just feel that this needs to be thought about."

Sasaki Chiho, who walked out of the door at the same time, shook her head unhappily.

"That's what is called thinking too hard about unnecessary things. People can only do what they can and leave the rest up to Heaven's will. Whether Maou can pass the full-time employment hiring exam is also included in this."

"Saying that the matter this time must be left up to 'Heaven's' will, isn't totally a joke too. Goodbye then! You should obediently return to the apartment immediately okay!"

Chiho puffed up her cheeks and left in the crowd.

"I already said so many times that I'm not a child.....well, thanks for the treat."

December, the month of Christmas, was already half gone.

Urushihara, who performed a ground-breaking and mind-blowing act of going out for personal business, coincidentally met Chiho who was on her way home from school.

In a rude manner, the comments Chiho gave treated Urushihara like some ferocious criminal or zombie.

And Urushihara listened as Chiho revealed her worries about how waiting for Maou and the rest could be a distant future filled with misery.

The task which Emi's mother Lailah hoped that Maou and Emi could complete in Ente Isla was not compatible with the trials which Maou would face in Japan in the near future.

This was what Chiho thought, and Urushihara agreed with this.

Even so, Chiho and Urushihara could not find a solution after discussing it.

Lailah wished to save the humans of Ente Isla, and Maou's goal was to pass the MgRonalds full-time employment exam.

In the eyes of a bystander, comparing these two things side by side when they have such a huge disparity with each other was stupid, but Chiho and Urushihara understood that these two things could be placed on the same level.

Therefore, Urushihara did not plan to say anything which would be beneficial to Chiho, but it felt that when Chiho left, she seemed to have found some of her usual spirit.

"Seriously, these people can really think about everything in the future and feel uneasy about every single thing. It would have been fine if they thought about it only when the time comes."

The root of Chiho's various troubles was that she did not want Maou and Emi to go somewhere far away.

If Urushihara had to say something, it was crazy how she could dawdle and trouble over such a small matter.

"Just go with the flow for everything."

Urushihara exhaled a white breath and slowly walked towards Villa Rosa Sasazuka.

But after walking a few steps, he suddenly frowned and looked around him.

"..... I want to go to the washroom."

It seemed like asking Chiho to buy expensive coffee during the chat was not a good decision.

After drinking something one was not used to, it felt that the urge to go to the washroom would come quickly.

"I'll probably get a stomach-ache later. Damn it. It's rare for someone to treat me, so I should just order something light."

Urushihara said this shamelessly and stopped in front of Sasazuka station.

"..... If I just go home immediately like what Sasaki Chiho said, it would feel really irritating."

In Urushihara's line of sight was a fast food restaurant at the shopping area underneath the Sasazuka station viaduct--- the Cotteria branch in front of Sasazuka station.

(T/N: This is the parody of the fast food restaurant Lotteria.)

Just like MgRonalds, it was a fast food restaurant which specialises in hamburgers, and with the geographical advantage of being in the shopping area under the viaduct, it was filled with customers.

"..... Doing this occasionally is fine. There's still quite some time until dinner, so I feel irritated if I go back immediately."

Not knowing who he was fighting with, Urushihara, who seemed rather bothered by what Chiho said, walked into Cotteria alone to fill his stomach.

"Welcome! Please head this way after you have decided on your order!"

"..... It feels the same everywhere."

The young female employee at the ordering counter greeted Urushihara enthusiastically.

This appearance seemed to overlap with Chiho's figure, causing Urushihara to frown.

"Hm--- then I want this set, as well as this and this."

Urushihara pointed at the menu on the ordering counter and the young female employee repeated it loudly.

“Alright, cheeseburger and cola as well as the shaker fries set, right?”

Only the name of the fries was a little strange, but without giving him a chance to think too much about it, the employee already asked Urushihara,

“What flavour do you want to choose for your fries?”

“Huh?”

Urushihara did not understand what was being asked and frowned, and the female employee pointed to the fries on the menu.

“You can choose the flavour you like in the shaker fries. This has already been added in the regular menu, please refer to this for the available flavours.”

“Uh, let me see..... anything will do, I’ll choose this then.”

Urushihara was not a shy person, but there was no need for him to be proactive and talk to the employee, so he just replied carelessly.

However, the employee did not seem to be affected by this and calmly handled Urushihara’s capricious order.

“Please take this order plate and wait at your seat. When the order has been prepared, we will deliver it to you.

“..... Uh? Alright, thanks.”

Urushihara’s family head Maou and Chiho, whom he just parted with, both worked at MgRonalds, and in MgRonalds, the customers should have taken all the food when they leave the counter.

When an order plate was given, it was because cooking time was needed and could not be provided immediately, so they could only deliver it later based on the number. This was different from the system Urushihara knew about, so he looked at the order plate in his hands, feeling a little perplexed.

“Ah, but this came at a good time.”

Urushihara put the order plate on the closest table and remembering that he wanted to go to the washroom, he walked towards the washroom in the store.

Like a burden, he could only bring along the bag holding his shopping, but he could leave the order plate at the seat.

After using the newly cleaned washroom and returning to his seat, a female employee came over holding a tray with Urushihara’s order.

“Thank you for waiting. Please enjoy.”

The warm store and the feeling of the sofa caused Urushihara to relax. He took off his hat, looked down at the tray and discovered something unfamiliar.

“.....Huh, what is this.”

He recognised the wrapping of the hamburger and the cola in the paper cup.

The problem was with the paper bag which took up the most space on the tray.

“Eh? Did I order such a big size?”

If that bag was filled with fries, then the amount would be rather shocking.

He checked the receipt hurriedly, but at the top, only ‘Fries set Medium” was written, and no price was written.

On opening the bag and taking a look, he saw that although the bag was big, there was not much content inside.

The container was different, but its appearance and smell was not that much different from the MgRonalds fries, and the paper bag should be used for takeaway when the person could not eat at the store, right?

“Then again, she did say something about flavour..... hm?”

It was only at this moment that Urushihara noticed it.

There was a small silver packet on the tray.

The words on the bag were the same as what Urushihara had carelessly picked just now.

When he picked it up and took a look, it felt like it contained a powder.

“..... Ah, so that's how it is.”

Urushihara finally understood why Cotteria used the term ‘Shaker Fries’ for this.

But other than that, this brought out other memories in Urushihara.

It was not anything else, but ‘the taste of potatoes’.

“I picked this without paying too much attention to it---- can I ask her to change another one---”

The surface of the silver packet had the words “Black Pepper”.

To Urushihara, this was a taste which would not bring up any good memories.

This happened at the start of Urushihara’s current lifestyle, during April of this year.

He was already quite sick of this taste.



“.....Huh, what is this.”

“Breakfast.”

A blunt and indifferent voice that seemed to be colder than the thing on the dining table.

“Breakfast.....is this, again?”

“You have an issue with this?”

In front of that gaze which seemed to pierce through him, the will to protest shrivelled up rapidly.

“No.....hm, erhm, anything is fine, I’m tucking in.”

Just the fact that he was given food was already something to rejoice about.

That was his current situation.

Within the plate placed on the simple kotatsu, there was a mountain of wrinkled french fries.

“Understand this, the current you can only eat this. I was reluctant to even give you these.”

“.....”

The gaze which looked down at him was more severe and chilling compared to when they were fighting side by side.

Demon General Alsiel.

Right now, in the foreign world of Japan, in this area called Sasazuka, he was using the name Ashiya Shiro.

He gambled his desires and ambitions to fight, and challenged Ashiya and his master, yet he lost.

Fallen angel Lucifer tasted defeat from Demon King Satan and Hero Emilia, who had assimilated into Japanese society.

He had fought with all his might until the streets of Sasazuka were destroyed, but he still lost in the end.

He could not complain even if he was killed on the spot, but for unknown reasons, Ashiya and his original master Demon King Satan did not kill him.

But decided that he would be placed at their living quarters.

“Hey, Alsiel.”

“What.”

“Do Demon King-sama and you live like this every day?”

“Currently, our household is facing a financial crisis. Before the next payday, the potatoes which Demon King-sama brings back is our lifeline.”

"You're kidding, right? The two are you are really living like humans? Since Demon King-sama still has some demonic magic left over, aren't you going to do something?"

"Are you referring to harming humans and carrying out robbery like what you did, Lucifer."

It was like that, but even if this was something which was commonly done by the Demon King Army when they were in Ente Isla, Alsiel actually gave Lucifer a hard time over it, causing Lucifer to feel perplexed.

"T, that's right....."

And Alsiel's answer was not what he expected at all.

"Give it a try. Even having a few lives would not be enough."

"Are the two of you afraid of Emilia?"

Lucifer said the name of their sworn enemy.

That was the name of the Hero who had been fighting against the Demon King Army in Ente Isla, but strangely worked together with Demon King Satan in the foreign world.

But Alsiel scoffed lightly.

"Emilia isn't that significant. More accurately, the threat of Emilia only surfaced in the recent days."

"Huh?"

"The world is huge. If you don't wish to throw away the life which you managed to keep, I advise you to act carefully. The threat is frequently around us."

"I don't know what you mean....."

Lucifer still wanted to say more, but,

"Hurry up and eat, I still have to clean up."

The icy voice caused him to shut up, and without any other choice, he started to slowly eat the wrinkled fries on the plate.

"Ah....."

A taste which could not satisfy the human taste buds at all spread in his mouth.

It was cold, and the moist fries stuck on his teeth. The oil which was stored for a long time had a strange sour taste, clinging to his tongue.

Not only that, the 'black pepper' on the fries had a very piercing sharp taste.

On these wrinkled and cold fries, this black pepper added a strong taste.

It would be fine if it could be eaten with other food, but like what Alsiel said just now, the household finances were tight, and they could only pair this with the small amount of miso soup they had left.

This kind of eating lifestyle, had gone on for five days.

Of course, he knew he was not in the position to ask for something more extravagant.

It was hard for him to accept it, but he understood the principle.

Even so.

“I’m sick of this!!”

Lucifer roared.

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Urushihara looked at the Cotteria silver packet and thought back to when he first started living at Villa Rosa Room 201, feeling slightly deflated.

Rather than an imprint, it was closer to mental trauma.

At that time, the MgRonalds which Maou worked at was promoting black pepper fries.

According to Maou, the store in front of Hatagaya station charted the highest sales in the area. If so, why was he able to bring back the remaining fries every day.

According to Urushihara’s deduction, it did not sell as well as mentioned.

Basically, the ‘promotion products’ and ‘seasonal products’ introduced by large franchises would always have rather impossible target sales volume.

He had lived in Japan for almost one year.

Even Urushihara, who did not go out much, knew that not many people would actively buy Christmas cakes from convenience stores.

Of course, the promotion characteristics of MgRonalds black pepper fries and convenience store Christmas cakes were completely different, but no matter what, the promotion of new products in the fast food world was still a limited time promotional campaign.

Therefore, Maou would bring back fries every day.

Urushihara immersed himself in these thoughts and tore open the silver packet.

“.....”

Urushihara poured the flavouring into the paper bag, closed it up and started to shake it.

Just like the name shaker fries, as long as the bag was shook like this, the flavouring and the fries would mix well together.

With this, a person would be able to eat fries of various flavours.

"Ah..... but then again."

As he shook the fries with a disinterested expression, Urushihara remembered one more thing.

"Because of that, I was able to get that laptop."



On that day, Lucifer was dragged outside by Alsiel, and they walked towards the community library.

He was able to live because of the other party's generosity, so he could only listen to orders, but he was still scared out of his wits.

The things Lucifer had done so far were all recorded as crimes within the country's Penal Code.

Currently, he was only as strong as a normal human, so if he was chased by law enforcers, he would not be able to fight back at all. Therefore, the Demon King and Alsiel did not allow Lucifer to go out.

If so, then what kind of wind was blowing that day?

Lucifer asked this, and Alsiel said mildly,

"We're using your name to apply for a library card."

"Huh?"

"In a community library, there is a limit to the number of books each person can borrow. If we apply a library card for you too, then we can borrow a few more books each time."

"Ahaha....."

He was getting used to how the Demon King and Alsiel would obediently follow human rules, but he would still frequently react in this tired manner.

"But wait a moment, my name....."

"Ah, that's right. I forgot to tell you, Demon King-sama condescended and helped you register your identity."

"Is it that easy to register an identity?"

Lucifer's question was nonchalantly ignored.

Alsiel just passed him a large paper box and a small card.

"Urushihara..... Urushihara Hanzo. Hanzooo?"

Lucifer frowned openly at this name.

“Hey, what’s with this name!”

“Is there anything you’re dissatisfied about?”

“I’m very dissatisfied! I have to say this! I can still understand Urushihara. It resembles Lucifer when spoken, but what is it with ‘Hanzo’.”

“You’re a fallen angel right. Half angel and half demon, so Demon King-sama said that using this name is good.”

“At least confirm it with me first!”

“What exactly are you unhappy about?”

“No matter what, this isn’t a name given to the young people of this era!”

“Apologise to all the Hanzos in Japan. In addition, you lived longer than me and Demon King-sama. At this point, there’s no need to give you a name which suits a young person.”

“You probably have not realised how unreasonable your words are, right?!”

“So picky. Anyway, since the residential card and medical insurance card have been done, it would be enough to apply for a library card. After the card application has been done, you should just pass the time in whatever way you want. I still have to work a little harder to look for books to borrow.”

“Seriously.....”

Lucifer a.k.a Urushihara Hanzo, tiredly followed behind Alsiel a.k.a Ashiya Shiro, and continued to head towards the community library.

“.....Fu”

Shibuya area Sasazuka community library.

This was the library Ashiya usually visited.

Because of the timing, there were very few people within the library, it was quiet and deserted.

There was only one female librarian at the counter, and the library card was issued in a few minutes.

“Urushihara. Don’t loiter around outside. Just stay quietly in the corner.”

“Stop treating me like a piece of dust.....”

Ashiya took Urushihara’s library card away and quickly walked to the shelves deep in the library.

“What can I do in this kind of place.....?”

Of course, until now, he never had a chance to go to a place like a library, and he had no interest in reading books, so he did not know how to spend his time.

“Stay in a corner, huh.”

In the end, Urushihara judged that this was the only thing he could do and he walked towards a shelf in the corner. Suddenly, his gaze stopped on a certain shelf.

“Economical cooking.....?”

That was a shelf which contained books related to cooking.

The name of that book was Housewife Economical Cooking, and the cover was placed across the aisle.

This placement was commonly seen at bookstores, but in this case, this was probably carelessly placed by a reader with bad social habits.

From the state of the binding and the book sleeve, this should be a very old book.

Urushihara had no reason to go to a library, yet his gaze had stopped on a cooking book, and that was only because the photo of french fries happened to be on the cover of that book.

Opening it and flipping a few pages, the fries in that photo seemed to be an image in “Fast food french fries which can also be made at home”.

“..... I don’t really understand, but it doesn’t feel that economical.”

If there was anything which was economical about it, it would probably be how to process the leftover scraps from the fries.

However, from the photo, there was a huge amount of scraps left over from the fries, making it hard to tell how many potatoes had to be cut to produce so many scraps.

“What are you looking at.”

At this moment, Ashiya walked over while holding a few books.

“Have you read all of this?”

“I browsed through them once.”

“Oh.”

“I am planning to read some cooking books. Move aside.”

“Sure sure. Take a look at this. It seems to be something about economical cooking.”

“I read that one already.”

“Ah, is that so.”

“This is an old book. Most of the recipes inside are targeted at large families and those with many children, it’s not suitable for those with nuclear families and homes like ours where they are only males.”

“Ah, I see, is that so.”

“What’s wrong?”

“No, nothing’s wrong. I just feel that only eating fries is an arduous experience, so I was wondering if there was any book which lists out any special cooking methods.”

“I briefly looked for that before. It’s not as if there was no method which could be used but handling the strong black pepper flavour without increasing our costs would be impossible. In addition, the food hygiene standards in Japan are much higher compared to Ente Isla. So it’s impossible for anyone to write about ‘how to handle leftover fries’.”

“Ugh.....yeah, probably.”

Ashiya walked away. Urushihara shrugged and returned to the shelf.

“..... Hah.”

He had to face those fries when he returned.

Urushihara started to walk between the shelves dejectedly and suddenly discovered one thing.

“Those are..... computers?”

Urushihara discovered that a few computers were arranged in a row in the corner of the shelves.

“As long as I have this, I would be able to kill some time.....”

He sat on the chair and looked towards the screen, the image on it was filled with a search function.

“.....Ah, this, could it be used to search the shelves?”

There was a small printer next to the monitor.

It was probably used to print the location of the book shelf.

Thinking about it, the computers in a public facility like a community library would probably be only used for this.

Urushihara frowned, but even so, to kill some time, he still tried to use the keyboard to enter the name of the economical cooking book.

“Uwah, the first print was in 1985..... isn’t that too old?”

Seeing the information shown, Urushihara showed a wry smile, then he suddenly noticed something and his eyes widened in response.

“The Central Library has two copies..... and one copy was borrowed? Let me take a look at Motomura Library, it’s also one copy in the library and one copy borrowed.....ah.”

He deduced that this system was a catalogue management system which was used by all the libraries in the Shibuya area.

“.....Which means, perhaps.”

Urushihara stared at the monitor and finally found his target.

"Then, this is probably....."

Urushihara typed on the keyboard for a long while, then.

[This line is intentionally left blank due to the formatting, remove before release.]

"Alsiel, Alsiel, come over for a bit."

"What is it, call me Ashiya....."

"Forget that, come over for a while. I don't want other people to see."

"..... What is it, what are you doing?"

Ashiya was at the reading area carefully reading the books which he wanted to borrow, but he felt a trace of uneasiness from Urushihara's tone and stood up.

Urushihara brought Ashiya to the search terminal, Ashiya saw a strange image shown on the screen of the search terminal and his eyes turned into huge saucers.

"Hey, Urushihara, what did you do....."

"These are ways to re-use old fries. Can you use them?"

Shown on the terminal was not the catalogue search window which Ashiya was used to seeing, but a photo displaying a large amount of french fries.

"W, what is this! Urushihara, did you break the search terminal....."

"Shh----! You're too loud. I didn't. I just fiddled with it a little to make it capable of accessing the internet."

"A search terminal accessing the internet? Internet refers to the world wide web? How did you do that....."

Urushihara seemed to have used the browser to connect to the internet used to search the different libraries.

But according to what Ashiya knew, it was impossible to use the library search terminals in this way.

"Oh my, it's actually very easy. It might be impossible if only the mouse could be used, but there is a keyboard here. In the end, the search terminal is just a computer manufactured in Japan, the installed operating system and browser is still left inside. By using a keyboard shortcut, it's possible to move the search window to the background. The CPU is probably hidden behind the table, but it can connect to the wireless signal in the air, after easily obtaining the password....."

"W, wait a moment, what are you saying ?! Speak in Japanese already, Japanese!"

"I did say that you're saying weird things earlier right. What I'm saying is still considered Japanese. The most important is this, making leftover fries taste like they are freshly made again. Hurry up and choose one which can be done at the apartment and remember it."

“What? How did you.....”

“Whichever is fine, I don’t know home electronics that well, just choose one you like and open up the page.”

“Ugh, ughm.....uh, this one then.....”

With his eyes rolling up into his head, Ashiya pointed at one link on the browser jitterily.

While worrying if the librarian or other employees would come over, they browsed on the internet for a few minutes.

Then.

[This line is intentionally left blank due to the formatting, remove before release.]

“It’s a success.....”

One hour later, Ashiya, who had returned home, picked up the thing which was placed on top of the simple kotatsu.

“Well---- they are still fries in the end, but the texture is so much better.”

Urushihara was eating the fries, and they produced a crisp ka-cha ka-cha sound, matching greatly with the hovering smell of black pepper.

“The edges are very burnt, but this ka-cha ka-cha portion can still be cut off and put into soup instead of bread, right?”

“That’s true.....”

After trying the method found on the internet, the wrinkled black pepper fries were revived into fried snacks.

“But if it’s just heated up, there would still be the strong taste of leftover oil. If new vegetable oil is added, then the pot needs to be washed again.”

“If so, as long as aluminium foil is used, it can be reused to some extent, by adding some more salt, the taste can be covered somewhat, and just heating it up can change the feeling significantly.”

“Ugh.....”

Ashiya picked up a piece of french fry in astonishment.

“There was this method, the books.....”

“Well---- no matter what, this method is too crude, if an accident or food poisoning occurred, the writer of the book would have to take responsibility. Therefore, when it comes to these issues, whether it is a good or bad thing, the internet is a grey area.”

Ashiya looked at Urushihara, who seemed very cheerful.

"You..... how did you learn about the world wide web and things related to it?"

"Hm.....if I say it, the reasons stopping me from leaving the house might just increase---"

"I understand. I won't ask anymore."

Ashiya regained his usual expression, but even then, the way he viewed Urushihara had changed, and it was probably not a trick of the mind.

"Well, since we're so poor, I would not forcefully ask for anything, but there is a lot of such information on the internet, filled with a lot of strange titbits which would not be known by normal forms of media. After making some contact with it, it might be very useful later, yeah? It might be possible to look for ways to recover demonic magic too, I guess? If Demon King-sama and you don't understand something, I feel that I can supplement both of you with various kinds of knowledge, just like what you saw earlier."

About ten days later, the Demon Fortress brought a laptop and installed an internet line.

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"Now that I think about it, that is fishing right?"

The results of the revival of the wrinkled fries was what brought about the internet enabled environment.

If this was not fishing, then what else could it be.

At that time, Ashiya was very shaken because Emi had appeared and his true identity had been exposed to Chiho.

There was also Urushihara's own situation. Nothing could be seen from Ashiya's appearance, but he was definitely feeling very troubled.

In addition, Maou also used up all his demonic magic to fix the streets of Sasazuka, all of this made Ashiya feel uneasy.

Urushihara made use of that uneasiness. Being phrased that way, it does sound bad.

"No matter what, black pepper fries are filled with bitterness."

Urushihara opened up by shaker fries bag which had been thoroughly shaken and ate one.

The fragrance of the oil, the softness of the potatoes and the taste of the pepper flavour complemented each other.

The heat on Urushihara's fingertips and the tip of his tongue seemed to have possessed his hand. The hand which picked up the fries could not stop at all.

"Yeah, fries have to be like this after all."

As he said this, he opened up the hamburger wrapping.

"Hm?"

He just noticed one thing and showed a wry smile.

"Now that I think about it..... in the end, I have never eaten MgRonalds black pepper fries when they are in a perfect state."

The taste which did not really exist in his memories could not be compared with reality.

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On the way home, Urushihara happened to meet up with Emi who had gotten off work, and the archangel Lailah who was together with her for some reason.

"Seriously! Why are you wandering on the streets without a guardian! Hurry up and go home!"

Emi said this indiscriminately in an agitated manner.

"Are you alright, Lucifer, walking around alone? Can you go back home safely? You won't get lost and get hungry?"

Lailah's truly concerned tone could only be seen as really rude.

As he looked up at the mother daughter pair, Urushihara suddenly thought of something.

In the end, before the issue of eating French fries, nonchalantly meeting Emi and Lailah on the streets, then having them feel concerned about whether he could return home was probably the strangest thing of all.

However, he did not feel it was strange anymore.

The evidence was, faced with these rebukes spawned from different reasons, Urushihara also naturally,

"Bell as well, Sasaki Chiho as well, the two of you as well! That's enough! I already said that I have lived many times longer than all of you!! I'm really going to get angry!"

Protested in the tone which he had become accustomed to.

--END--